M/s. Prem Sakhi Fertilizer Ltd., Udaipur and M/s. Bohra Industries Ltd., Udaipur had supplied sub-standard Single Super Phosphate (SSP) in that State. Similarly, reports from the State Government of Bihar were also received that M/s. Oswal Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd. (OCFL) had supplied sub-standard DAP in November, 2004 in the State. News had also appeared that M/s OCEL had supplied sub-standard DAP in Punjab also. Department of Fertilizers withheld the payment of concession received by the above companies in respect of the sub-standard sales. The State Governments also took requisite action against the above companies under the Fertilizers Control Order, 1985 for supply of sub-standard fertilizer.

(d) The procedure to verify claims for the subsidy is governed under the guidelines dated 5.8.2002 on Concession Scheme of decontrolled phos-phatic & Potassic (P&K) fertilizers. The manufacturers are released 85% 'On account' payment and the balance payment is released to them on the certification of sales by the State Governments in the prescribed Performa.

Edible Oil Import

3391. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIV. HANUMANTHA RAO:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's edible oil imports rose 19 percent to 46.3 lakh metric tonnes in the eleven months period ended 30th September, 2005 from 38.8 lakh tonnes a year earlier;

(b) whether India is world's third largest buyer of vegetable oils;

(c) whether the overall imports of refined oil is reported at 4,36,823 tonnes while crude oil is reported at 41,93,660 tonnes during November, 2004 to September, 2005;

(d) if so, the main reasons of high rise of import of edible oil and steps Government propose to take to check this rise;

(e) whether several steps have been taken to reduce the oil imports in the country; and

(f) if so, to what extent edible oil production in India is likely to improve during 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) (a) According to Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India's edible oil imports rose about 9 percent to 41.72 lakh metric tonnes in the eleven months period ended 30th September 2005 from 38.44 lakh tonnes a year earlier.

(b) India is world's third largest buyer of vegetable oils after China and European Union.

(c) According to available information, imports of refined oil and crude oil have been broadly in the proportion of 1:9 during the period.

(d) and (e) The main reasons for large import of edible oil include favorable international price situation and domestic demand growth. Some of the steps taken to check/reduce oil imports are:-

(i) The import duty structure of edible oils is reviewed from time to time.

(ii) With effect from 15.2.2005, import duty on Crude Palm Oil/Crude Palmolein has been raised from 65% to 80% and import duty on refined Palm Oil/RBD Palmolein has been raised from 75%to 90%.

(iii) Tariff Value is fixed from time to time for Palm Oil and its products and soyabean oil.

(iv) Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses Oil Palm

(v) Better incentives are provided to producers through fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) of major oilseeds.

(f) Production of nine oilseeds (hence of edible oils) in India has been targeted at 265.84 lakh tonnes in 2005-06 against last year estimates of 261.03 lakh tonnes.

Relaxing specifications of paddy produce

3392. SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made relaxations in regard to specifications of paddy produce and announced new procurement price of paddy this year; if so, the details of the relaxations and procurement price of different varieties of paddy;